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ABSTRACT

Conference papers reviewing the role of decision making in social studies education since 1960 are presented. The focus of the discussion was a paper by Shirley Engle published in 1960 entitled "Decision Making: The Heart of Social Studies Instruction." The first part of the booklet contains the text of that paper. Engle maintained that the purpose of social studies is education for citizenship, which requires that students know how to make decisions, not just to memorize facts. Engle called for an emphasis on teaching decision making based on values formation in each student. The remainder of the booklet contains three presentations reviewing the progress of Engle's ideas through 1977. C. Benjamin Cox reviews the history of efforts to incorporate values instruction throughout the 1960s. The complexity of teaching problem solving and decision making based upon the conceptualization of social scientific knowledge prevented successful realization of Engle's goal. Wilma S. Longstreet describes how social studies educators have failed to teach students to act with rational awareness in the midst of a complex and changing social environment. Jan L. Tucker explains that the ill-defined nature of social studies and an increasing pessimism about formal schooling have limited the development of public support for the social studies. Despite the slow progress of the discipline, it is encouraging that social studies educators are continuing to search for ways to incorporate decision making and values into the curriculum. (Author/AV)

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Decision-Making: The Heart of Social Studies Instruction Revisited

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Dedicated to the Memory of

Ora May Engle

1905-1978

FOREWORD

In December, 1976, Shirley H. Engle retired as Professor of Education at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. Seeking an appropriate way to give recognition to this outstanding educator his colleagues quickly discarded such traditional symbols of retirement as gold watches, rocking chairs, and retirement dinners as unbefitting Professor Engle's personality and life-style. Instead they elected to hold a two-day conference in his honor, each segment of the conference drawing attention to one particular aspect of his many professional contributions.

Thus, on April 14 and 15, 1977, nearly one hundred colleagues, students and former students, former mentors, and friends attended a conference in his honor organized around the theme "Issues in Citizen Education, Social Studies, and Curriculum Theory." The conference began with Shirley Engle presiding over a panel featuring addresses on citizen education in the United States and in the Federal Republic of Germany. (The papers and discussion have been published by the Institute of German Studies, Indiana University.) The conference closed with a curriculum theory panel in which three of Professor Engle's former teachers and one of his current doctoral students presented papers.

Sandwiched between the two events noted above was a program that may have pleased Shirley Engle most of all. This was a panel consisting of five of Shirley Engle's former doctoral students. Four presented papers; a fifth presided over the panel. Members of the panel had been instructed to re-read Shirley Engle's article, "Decision-Making: The Heart of Social Studies Instruction" that first appeared in *Social Education* in November, 1960 and to comment on the impact of that article on social studies in the "past, present, and future."

Three of the papers presented on April 14, 1977 are published here for the first time together with Shirley Engle's 1960 article that has been reprinted several times. The papers by Benjamin Cox and Wilma Longstreet treat the message of the Engle article directly by attempting to chart the fate of his ideas since 1960. Jan Tucker's paper adopts a different tack. He explores what has happened to the place of social studies in the school curriculum in recent years and suggests what must be done for it to be restored to a pre-eminent position.

It is also important to point out that this volume is the first "occasional paper" to be published by the Social Studies Development Center, an organization that was established in 1968 through Shirley Engle's leadership. We are grateful to the authors for permitting us to publish their papers, to the National Council for the Social Studies for granting permission to reprint Shirley Engle's 1960 article, and to the donor who made the publication of this volume possible.

Lee Ehman
Gerald Marker
Howard Mehlinger

DECISION MAKING: THE HEART OF SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTION*

Shirley H. Engle
Indiana University

My theme is a very simple one. It is that, in teaching the social studies, we should emphasize decision making as against mere remembering. We should emphasize decision making at two levels, at the level of deciding what a group of descriptive data means, how these data may be summarized or generalized, what principles they suggest; and also decision making at the level of policy determination, which requires a synthesis of facts, principles, and values usually not all found on one side of any question.

In order to make my case, it is useful to draw certain distinctions between the social sciences and the social studies. The social sciences include all of the scholarly, investigative work of historians, political scientists, economists, anthropologists, psychologists, and sociologists, together with such parts of the work of biologists and geographers as relate to human behavior. Closely related fields include philosophy, literature, linguistics, logistics, and statistics. The social studies, including the content of the textbooks, courses of study, and whatever passes in the school for instruction in civic and social affairs, are based on the social sciences but they clearly involve always a selection of and distillation from the social sciences—they encompass only a minor portion of the social sciences.

Selectivity, therefore, is one of the features which distinguishes the social sciences from the social studies. To social science, knowledge is useful for its own sake; all knowledge is of equal worth; there is no concern for immediate usefulness. To the social studies, a central consideration must always be that of determining what knowledge is of most worth. If all of the knowledge of a field of study is to be boiled down into one textbook, what is to be emphasized? If all of the knowledge of the area is to be boiled down into one course of study, what is most important?

There is a more basic distinction to be drawn between the social sciences and the social studies than merely that of selectivity. The impelling purpose of the two is quite different. The orientation of the social scientist is that of research. The more scientific the social scientist, the more specialized becomes his interest, the more consuming becomes his desire to know more and more about less and less, the less concern he shows for broad social problems. He is far more inclined to analyze, dissect, and proliferate than to unite, synthesize, and apply. His absorbing interest is to push back the frontier of dependable knowledge in some limited sector of the social scene.

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In marked contrast to the meticulous research orientation of the social sciences, the social studies are centrally concerned with the education of citizens. The mark of the good citizen is the quality of decisions which he reaches on public and private matters of social concern. The social sciences contribute to the process of decision making by supplying reliable facts and principles upon which to base decisions—they do not supply the decisions ready-made. The facts are there for all to see but they do not tell us what to do. Decision making requires more than mere knowledge of facts and principles; it requires a weighing in the balance, a synthesizing of all available information and values. The problems about which citizens must reach decisions are never confronted piecemeal, the facts are seldom clearly all on one side, and values, too, must be taken in relative isolation. Thus in the social studies the prevailing motive is synthesis rather than analysis. The social studies begin where the social sciences end. Facts and principles which are the ends in view in the social sciences are merely a means to a further end in the social studies. The goal of the social studies lies not merely in information but in the character of people. The goal is the good citizen.

A good citizen has many facts at his command, but more, he has arrived at some tenable conclusions about public and social affairs. He has achieved a store of sound and socially responsible beliefs and convictions. His beliefs and convictions are sound and responsible because he has had the opportunity to test them against facts and values. In the process of testing his ideas he has greatly increased his fund of factual information and he has become increasingly skillful at intelligent decision making. The development in the mind of students of such a synthesis of facts and values, together with the development of skill in making decisions in the light of numerous and sometimes contrary facts and values, is the special forte of the social studies.

If the purpose of the social studies is to be education for citizenship, if its primary concern is to be the quality of the beliefs and convictions which students come to hold on public questions, and if we are to be concerned with the development of skill at decision making, then there are some things which it becomes imperative that we do in teaching the social studies. I would like to develop briefly some of these imperatives.

We must abandon our use of what I shall call the ground-covering technique, and with it the wholly mistaken notion that to commit information to memory is the same as to gain knowledge. By ground covering I mean the all too familiar technique of learning and holding in memory, enforced by drill, large amounts of more or less isolated descriptive material without pausing in any way, at any time, to speculate as to the meaning or significance of the material, or to consider its relevance and bearing to any general idea, or to consider its applicability to any problem or issue past or present. Even when such material is interesting, and it sometimes is, merely to cover it in this uncritical, matter-of-fact fashion robs the material of its potential for accurate concept formation or generalization which will be useful to students in understanding events and conditions in other times and

places in which like data appear. Simply reading and remembering the stories about Indians in our history, no matter how many times repeated, has never insured the development of accurate concepts about Indians or correct generalizations about the relationships between people of divergent cultures and histories. Or, if in our haste to cover ground, we refuse to deal contemplatively and critically with the material we are covering, the student may generalize haphazardly and may, without our help, arrive at totally erroneous conclusions. Thus, it may be said with good reason that the study of Indians frequently does more harm than good, teaching more untruth than truth.

The ground-covering fetish is based on the false notion that remembering is all there is to knowing or the equally false notion that one must be well drilled in the facts before he can begin to think. M. I. Finley, noted British historian, says about ground-covering that "a mere telling of individual events in sequence, no matter how accurately done, is just that and nothing else. Such knowledge is meaningless, its mere accumulation a waste of time. Instead, knowledge must lead to understanding. In the field of history this means trying to grasp general ideas about human events. The problem is to move from particular events to the universal; from the concrete events to the underlying patterns and generalities."

Equally fallacious is the background theory of learning, or the notion that we must hold the facts in memory before we are ready to draw conclusions from them or to think about their meaning. This theory is at considerable variance with recognized scientific method and the ways in which careful thinkers approach an intellectual problem. The thinker or scientist frequently engages in speculation or theorizing about possible relationships, from which he deduces tests or possible facts which, if observable, verify his theory. (Some of the great break-throughs in knowledge have come about in this way.) To say that a thinker must know all that he needs to know, let alone hold all this in memory, before engaging in thought is to completely hog-tie his intellectual development. And there is no valid reason in this respect for differentiating between a student trying to understand Indians and Einstein speculating about the meaning of space.

What happens in our classrooms from too strict an adherence to ground covering is that the number of facts committed to memory is reduced to a relatively small number. These are the so-called basic facts which we learn and just as promptly forget, over and over again. Thus ground covering actually works to reduce and restrict the quantity of factual information treated in our classes. What is needed instead is a vast multiplication of the quantity of factual material with which students are asked to deal in the context of reaching a reasoned conclusion about some intellectual problem. Such an enrichment of factual background will come about when we turn from our preoccupation with remembering to a more fruitful concern for drawing conclusion from facts or for testing our speculations and ideas about human events with all of the relevant data we are able to collect.

For ground covering, or remembering, we should substitute decision making, which is reflective, speculative, thought provoking, and oriented to the process of

reaching conclusions. My thesis is simply this, decision making should afford the structure around which social studies instruction should be organized. The central importance of decision making in the social studies has been cited earlier. The point here is that students are not likely to learn to reach better decisions, that is, grounded and reasoned decisions, except as they receive guided and critically oriented exercise in the decision-making process.

Decision-making opportunities in the social studies classroom may run the entire gamut of difficulty, from very simple situations which take the form merely of posing questions for class consideration which require some thought and a synthesis of information supplied in a single descriptive paragraph to very complex social problems involving questions of public policy or individual behavior. Thus, in studying the Plains Indians in the post-Civil-war period a low level decision could be required by asking which of the following sentences accurately, or most accurately, summarizes the difficulty continually experienced in Indian affairs: (1) The Indians were treated by the settlers as trespassers on land which they (the Indians) had inhabited and claimed as their own for centuries; (2) The Plains Indians were wanderers who knew no fixed abodes and recognized no exclusive right of anyone to own the land; (3) Renegade Indians and white outlaws were at the seat of Indian trouble (this is the Hollywood version of Indian affairs); (4) The handling of Indian affairs by the United States government was characterized by wanton disregard of Indian rights, by treachery, and by broken promises; or (5) The different manner of using the land by the Indians and the whites made agreement between the two impossible. At a higher level of difficulty a decision would be required if one asked, "Do you think General George Crook dealt fairly with the Shoshone chief, Washakie, during the military campaigns to pacify the Plains Indians? What are your grounds? Or at a still higher level of complexity, there is the question of what should be the policy of the United States toward Indians who contest the sovereignty of the United States.

Some decisions involve essentially matters of fact. For example, suppose we are reading about the building of the transcontinental railroads in the 1870's, and 1890's and how the government gave large grants of land and money to the railroad companies to encourage them to build railroads. We read further that subsequently the railroads, or most of them, went into bankruptcy but also that following their construction the country experienced a great expansion of agricultural and industrial wealth whereby our exports of wheat and corn multiplied in 20 years and in the same period the value of our manufacturers' products increased 200 percent, 180 new factories were being built in Philadelphia alone. We have these and many other facts. But the decision rests in concluding what these facts mean. What do they all add up to? Which of the following generalizations accurately summarize these facts? Government subsidization of key industries brings a vast multiplication of other industries under private ownership; private investors will not take the extraordinary risk necessary to start a really new industrial development; one industrial development inevitably leads to other industrial developments; industry in which the

government interferes is always inefficient and will fail in the end; private industry can never be expected to provide the transportation facilities needed for an expanding economy; government participation in industry tends to dry up the growth of private industry; industry resulting from government spending is uneconomical and is doomed to fail in the end; if the government had foregone the tax money used to aid the railroads, private individuals would have had money which they would have invested in the railroads. Clearly, the making of decisions among the alternatives listed above is essentially a matter of sorting out and applying facts until a conclusion is reached which honestly and accurately summarizes all facts that are relevant to the problem.

Other decisions, perhaps we should say most decisions, involve values as well as facts. Thus, in dealing with the issue of which of two proposed solutions to the problems of farm surpluses is best, one may conclude, factually, that government support of farm prices lead inevitably to inefficiency in agriculture and to unnecessarily high cost for food and fibre which the farm produces. This much is a factual conclusion. But this does not necessarily get us out of the woods, for one might still prefer government-supported agriculture to an unregulated agriculture because he feared the control of large agricultural corporations (which will almost inevitably follow the removal of government restrictions—another factual generalization) more than he fears governmental controls. The latter decision is a value judgment, though one fraught, as are all value decisions, with still further implications which would be grounded factually. For instance, in a hierarchy of values, the greatest degree of individual freedom may be the value sought or agreed upon by all involved in the decision. From this premise a factual investigation could be conducted of the relationship between government regulation and individual freedom on the other. Thus, though the decision as to value is not in this way resolved, the exact issue over value is clarified by such a factual investigation of the alternatives.

If decision making is to be the focus of social studies instruction, we will need to introduce vastly larger quantities of factual information into our classrooms. Drill to the point of memory on a few basic facts will never suffice. The superficial coverage of one textbook will never be enough. The very moment that a conclusion, such as any of those suggested above, is reached tentatively, the natural demand is for more facts with which to test the conclusion. This means almost surely the introduction of large quantities of supplementary materials, with far too much content to be committed to memory. It means a reversal in the usual attitude on reading habits whereby students will be expected to read larger quantities of materials, to read them more rapidly, and to read them for purposes of getting general ideas or of locating relevant information rather than to read small quantities of material, slowly and laboriously, a few pages each day, for purposes of committing the material to memory. It may mean in the end the abandonment of textbooks and the substitution of numerous, more substantive, more informative, and more exciting books and other materials.

If the quality of decision making is to be the primary concern of social studies instruction, we must take steps to up-grade the quality of intellectual activity in the social studies classroom. Research is demonstrating the dequoting prevalence in many social studies classrooms of what is generally labelled shoddy thinking procedures. In fact, social studies classrooms seen: to exhibit a quality of logic far below that exhibited in classrooms in which science, mathematics, or even English is being taught. Admitting the greater difficulty of our content, this is still something about which we cannot be complacent. Among the common errors in logic easily observed in social studies instruction is the acceptance of an assertion as if it were a fact, the confusing of fact with opinion, the validation of the truth of something on authority, the acceptance of a merely plausible explanation for a sufficient explanation, the failure to agree on the meaning of key words (frequently value laden) before engaging in an argument in which the meaning of the word is essential as, for instance, to argue over whether the first Roosevelt was a good or a strong President without first agreeing on a common meaning for "good" and for "strong" and the confusing of questions which must be referred to facts for an answer and those which defer to values for an answer. The persistent practice in our classrooms of errors in logic of the kind mentioned can lead only to intellectual confusion and irresponsibility. If we are really concerned with effective citizenship, we must not only provide the opportunity for decision making but we must see to it that decision are made in keeping with well known rules of science and logic and that students get practice in making such decisions.

Lastly, if responsible decision making is the end of social studies instruction, we must recognize values formation as a central concern of social studies instruction. Real life decisions are ultimately value decisions. To leave a student unaware of the value assumptions in his decision or to leave him untrained in dealing with values questions is literally to lead an innocent lamb to the slaughter. Such a student could, and he frequently does, return to our fold and say, "But you didn't tell me it was this way." Or he may quickly sink into cynicism or misbelief. The question of what values he should hold probably cannot be settled in the classroom, but values can be dealt with intelligently in the classroom. The nature of the values which people hold can be made explicit, the issues over values can be clarified, and the ends to which holding to a particular value will lead can be established factually to some extent. For instance, it is possible to predict with some accuracy the factual results of valuing segregation over integration in the United States with respect to such matters as economic productivity of the American people, the respect with which America is held abroad, the effect on the efficiency of our educational system, the genetic mixing of the races, etc. Thus, it becomes possible to engage in some appraisal of the value in terms of other values held, as, for instance, world peace, Christian brotherhood, economic security and well being, national unity, the right to choose one's own friends, etc. We can compare and appraise value, to some extent, in an extended hierarchy of values from lower value, such as a preference for having one's hair cut in a segregated barber shop, to high values, such as the belief that all men should be treated with equal respect.

To duck the question of values is to cut the heart out of decision making. The basic social problem of America today is a problem of value. In simple terms the problem may be stated as to whether we value more the survival of a free America which will require sacrifice for education, for materials of defense, etc., or whether we value more our right as individuals to spend our resources on extra fins for our cars and for all the other gadgets of conspicuous consumption. It is not impossible to predict the outcome of hewing to either choice. It is not at all certain that our students are being prepared to make the right decision and to make it in time.

My thesis has been a very simple one. It is that quality decision making should be the central concern of social studies instruction. I could cite many renowned people as having essentially supported the position I have here tried to state. Among the ancients these would include Socrates, Plato, and Thucydides, the father of objective history. These would include the great modern philosopher Alfred North Whitehead and such modern critics as the economist Peter Drucker and President Robert F. Goheen of Princeton. But to quote these would continue the discussion overlong, as I suspect I may have done already. So may I quote instead a simple statement from the noted modern scientist Hans Seyle, who has said that "facts from which no conclusions can be drawn are hardly worth knowing."

**SHIRLEY'S SIMPLE THEME:
A CRITIQUE OF ENGLE'S "DECISION MAKING,
THE HEART OF SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTION"**

C. Benjamin Cox
University of Illinois

Engle didn't say it all; but he said most of it. He didn't say it first, but he may have said it best and clearest. In the most disarming language he claimed his theme to be a simple one. "We should emphasize decision making" in teaching social studies, he said.

At a time when we in the U.S. were about to embark on the great national game of the sanguine sixties—"The Dollar Chase"—Engle told us where to put our money, if we could get our hands on some. But there were other drummers in the sixties and most of the successful gamesters who caught the dollars and waved the victory banner with its emblazoned slogan, "The New Social Studies," marched to them.

The loudest drummer of them all in those days was Jerry Bruner. Battalions followed his beat. They went scurrying about trying to disentangle the concept of structure, never doubting that truth at last had been found at Woods Hole.¹ They busied themselves making lists of concepts associated with social science analysis, describing the researching behaviors of social scientists and historians, and spewing forth the central principles and generalizations of each and every discipline in the social field. No simple tasks these, especially when one recalls that children, too, were expected to follow suit. Fenton showed the kids how to be historians; Angell showed them how to be sociologists; Collier and Hanvey showed them how to be anthropologists; Mehlinger and Patrick showed them how to be political scientists; Senesh showed them how to be economists; and Helburn and Kurfman showed them how to be geographers.²

Lest too harsh a disparagement is inferred from this language, it should be noted that the materials coming out of the shops of these and other successful developers of the sixties and early seventies were the most sophisticated, scholarly, and interesting social science and history programs ever published for schools. The new approaches, strategies, readings, and exercises forged a revitalization of the social disciplines in schools, if they did not revolutionize social studies.

But revolutionize social studies they did not. The revolutionaries went marching off in other directions. Ironically, it was not Bruner's drum they heard, but an ancient corps of drums, those of Charles Pierce, John Dewey, and Bruce Raup, whose beats reverberated the concepts of science, reflection, and practical intelligence.³

THE REVOLUTIONARY VANGUARD

Theirs, however, was not battalion in the early sixties; it was a small company of true believers. At the vanguard of this small company was Alan Griffin and Earl Johnson who, in the mid fifties, had inspired Lawrence Metcalf to fall in beside Maurice Hunt to produce their *Teaching High School Social Studies*. 'Close behind was Shirley Engle, who nearly missed Metcalf at Illinois, but who counted B.O. Smith and William Stanley among his mentors, no mean repositories themselves of the Pierce, Dewey, Raup line of thought. By them, Smith had collaborated with Raup and others on *The Improvement of Practical Intelligence*, an early attempt to wed the mystique and analysis of valuing.

While Smith, from his vantage point in History & Philosophy of Education, and later, Metcalf, in social studies, continued to feed the revolution from Illinois with scholars like John Palmer, Roland Payette, and Dana Kurfman, Engle turned out revolutionaries from Indiana. At one time he had in his grasp Byron Massialas, Jack Cousins, Robert Elsmere, and Ben Cox, who, under Engle's tutelage, produced "The Indiana Experiments in Inquiry."³ Though Massialas and Cox cut new ground in classroom research by the use of transcript analysis and the consistent application of a model of reflective thinking in teaching, it was Cousins who produced the most meticulous analysis of reflective thought gleaned from classroom tape recordings. It is that venture, the logical and linguistic analysis of classroom discourse, that may permit us to unravel major aspects of reflective decision making in social studies instruction.

Don Oliver and his apt student, James Shaver, were also probing in this analytic direction at Harvard in the early sixties. They, too, were emphasizing the goal of making rational decisions and were analyzing classroom and interview tapes to determine what students and teachers did verbally to achieve closure on decision requiring questions. They comprised the left flank of the social studies revolutionary company of the sixties.⁴

THE ANALYSIS OF VALUES

While hordes did not join this small revolutionary body in the sixties, the line of development did not die with the decade. Engle had mentioned among the decisions to be made in social studies instruction the importance of value judgments. "Most decisions," he postulated rightly, "involve values...." Exactly how values and the making of value judgments were to be incorporated in instruction, however, was not altogether clear. It is one thing, and an important thing, to say to teachers that they should treat value questions in their classrooms, but quite another to explicate a systematic means of treating value questions in classrooms.

To be sure, the Columbia Associates' model was available in the sixties; but is vagueness became painfully evident in the midst of classroom discussions on governmental farm policy, the subsidization of industry, or the treatment of the

Plains Indians.' Raup and company had posited some dramatic implications for classrooms via the method of practical intelligence; but shepherding a class through indicative, optative, contemplative, and imperative moods, monitoring their character change and development of community the while, was beyond the ken of most social studies teachers. Moreover, Hunt and Metcalf's "closed areas," those clusters of unresolved values, were often referred to in discussions of social studies instruction; but few teachers grasped the implications of focusing their teaching on value conflicts.

In the late fifties and early sixties, Smith and a band of graduate assistants at Illinois, Robert Ennis, Roland Payette, Milton Meux, and Jerry Coombs among them, were beginning to look at transcriptions of classroom lessons in an effort to decipher the logical and linguistic patterns of normal instruction vis a vis ideal models from logical and philosophical literature. One of the constructs emerging from that research group and published in its first research report, *A Study of the Logic of Teaching*, was a model of valuation that traded heavily on the analytic philosophy of Paul Taylor and others.'

Within a decade, that value model, forever after to be called "value analysis," was fed into the revolutionary stream through Metcalf's NCSS yearbook, *Values Education*.' Written largely by Meux and Coombs, the little volume on "value analysis" was a fitting response to Engle's prescription that "We should emphasize...decision making at the level of policy determination, which requires a synthesis of facts, principles, and value...."

That value analysis more clearly fits what Engle had in mind in 1960 than, say, value clarification, the presently highly favored approach to values in social studies literature, seems evident in the cursory look he gives us in "Decision Making" at what might occur in a discussion of governmental agriculture policy. He suggests a decision is to be made in view of the facts of the matter and "the value sought or agreed upon by all involved in the decision." The suggestion is one of applying a value as a criterion in judging the goodness of a policy, a value analysis strategy. Moreover, the suggestion is one of justifying the criterion to be applied to the policy, distinctly a value analysis operation.

DESCRIBING A REVOLUTION

In the description of a revolution, one has several alternatives. The progenitors of the revolution can be described indicating their various contributions to the new regime. I have used this approach in pointing to some persons, such as Shirley Engle, who stand out as formers of doctrine or inventors of seminal pieces. The goals of the revolution can be assessed and analyzed to show the meaning and implications of the new direction. By the end of this statement some general implications will be suggested. The structural parts of the revolution could be emphasized. Here the crucial elements of the new system would be displayed, probably including its major ends as well as its functional means. Some of these were referred to in my introduction of the revolution metaphor. I would like, however, to express these in a more systematic way. Finally, the faults and flaws of

the revolution could be exposed as a partial explanation of its shortcomings and failures. That this social studies revolution is critically flawed is not being suggested; but with a little effort, we probably can find some faults worth noting.

In this part of my essay I will borrow from each of these approaches as it suits my purposes. I will start with an approach to goals.

Goals and Methods of the Revolution

For Engle, as well, perhaps, as for most social studies practitioners and theorists for the past 60 years, the goal of social studies education is the development of the good citizen. "The goal is the good citizen," Engle wrote in 1960. Obviously, any definitions of "good citizen" is programmatic: it implies a rating, entails a criterion, and embodies a program toward which one is committed if the definition is accepted. Engle was very careful about his definition of the good citizen. He seemed deliberately, in 1960, to shun the easy platitudes of loyalty and law obedience, on the one hand, and to avoid any suggestions of political involvement and social action, on the other. Citizenship, according to Engle, is primarily an intellectual endeavor, an enterprise of reasoning and valuing. The good citizen decides things rationally and develops justifiable beliefs. Though by 1970, in his NCSS presidential address, Engle was flirting with the notion that "Intelligent and responsible involvement is the ultimate goal of citizenship education," it was only a flirtation; the theme of the 1970 statement is consistent with the statement of 1960.¹⁰

Thus, the thinking citizen was the ideal character of the revolution. None of the literature and rhetoric of the revolution can be understood without reference to this central concept.

A pedagogical dogma attached itself to the revolution. Engle noted in 1960 some elements of the dogma as "some things which it becomes imperative that we do in teaching the social studies." To be sure, some of these are "do not's." Ground-covering, backgrounding, and memorizing were chief among Engle's list of evil preoccupations in social studies classrooms in 1960. Only slightly less abhorrent is a preoccupation with history and the social science disciplines. Not that Engle and most of the revolutionaries had a distaste for history and the disciplines. Quite the contrary, it would seem. Most, in fact, found it convenient or necessary to prepare themselves in one or more of them; and most would permit some use of the disciplines in school. A footnote to the dogma recognized the contingency relationship between social studies and the scholarly social disciplines.

What Engle seemed to be criticizing was the offering of the disciplines alone as sufficient for citizenship education. A part of this whole question has been the trouble social studies, as anything other than "a federation" of history and social sciences, has had in claiming legitimacy among historians and social scientists.¹¹ In their views, social studies is a child of sin. Social science is its mother and history is its father; their cohabitation, though fruitful, has yet to be sanctified.

The dogma also contained a number of pedagogical prescriptions. These were the acts that had to be performed in classrooms of the revolution. Shirley referred to

these as "guided and critically oriented exercise in the decision making process." He would have teachers ask their students in the fact of contrasting interpretations of an event, "Which of these is most accurate? What makes you think so?" Among competing explanations, Shirley would have us ask, "Which is most powerful? What makes it best?" In the consideration of contradicting policies, he would want us to ask, "Which would be preferable? Why do you think so? What are your grounds?" The focus was on decisions; the attention was on belief; the emphasis was on justification.

Reflective Thinking/Inquiry

The rhetoric of the revolution was heavily concerned with reflective thinking and inquiry as both goal and method in social studies. In large measure, the focus on reflection came straight from the pen of Dewey. In the early years of the century, he was writing about the "complete act of thought" in *How We Think*. The CAT, as educational philosophers came to refer to it either endearingly or critically, was unquestionably the epicentric dynamic of the revolution. CAT shows up across the field of education. Dewey proposed it as a general construct in 1910 and again in 1933.¹² Ernest Bayles utilized the model in producing the concept of "reflective teaching" in the Kansas studies in 1956;¹³ and Gordon Hullfish and Phillip Smith fleshed it out appreciably in their *Reflective Thinking: The Method of Education* in 1961.¹⁴ For social studies, however, the Hunt and Metcalf 1955 translation of CAT was most influential. Engle used that version extensively in his teaching at Indiana. His students of the era poured over the Hunt and Metcalf volume like medieval monks sorting out pins and angels.

Engle himself, steered clear of the fussy work of ferreting out of lesson transcripts the verbal moves and logical operations that comprise the tissue of a reflective lesson. He preferred to keep his eye on the large questions: "What distinguishes social studies from the social sciences?" "What are the curriculum and program implications of decision making?" "What sorts of decisions must citizens be prepared for?" Nonetheless, he recognized the necessity for some of the punctilious stuff and encouraged his students to do some of it. Cousins, as I mentioned, with the help of his thesis advisor, Fred Smith, and a raft of jurors, did the most along this line of logical analysis at Indiana. Cousins gleaned out of his classroom transcripts verbal evidence of critical thinking skills on the part of his eighth grade students.¹⁵

Many since then have added dimensional sophistication to the concept of inquiry and to an understanding of its verbal practice in classrooms. Massialas, for one, with a coterie of students at Michigan, developed an observational instrument that permits an inference about the quality of inquiry in a classroom from the quantity of certain verbal behaviors associated mainly with meanings and the making and testing of hypotheses.¹⁶

However, it was Smith at Illinois who contributed most of the detail of the infrastructure of inquiry. Though he had no specific intention of making a direct

contribution to a description of reflective thinking in classrooms, his analysis of verbal moves that teachers use to develop concepts, explanations, and evaluations provides the basic raw material needed to describe more exactly what takes place in the process of inquiry.

When Metcalf was in search of fresh material for his 1971 NCSS yearbook on values, he fell upon the analytic work of Smith and his students, Meux and Coombs, as fitting most aptly the line of development he had joined in 1955. They, in turn, had borrowed heavily from the analytic philosophy of Richard Hare, Kurt Baier, Paul Taylor and others in constructing a value analysis model applicable in classrooms.¹⁷ In so choosing this analytical philosophy line of development as the one to posit in the revolutionary pot, Metcalf rejected the more psychological and possibly more relativistic approach of his former mentor at Ohio State, Louis Rath. By 1971, Rath and his colleagues, Merrill Harmon and Sidney Simon, had become the national champions of "value clarification," a system reflecting a pervasive respect for the personal experience of individuals as the validating source of values.¹⁸

That Engle was approving of Metcalf's choice is inferrable from his NCSS presidential address in November 1970. He speaks there of a future social studies that would feature "analytic treatment of values" and sprinkles throughout that paragraph a half dozen code words that bring delight to proponents of value analysis. He seemed also, ten years earlier, to have presaged his position in "Decision Making."

Why both Engle and Metcalf opted for analysis over clarification is problematic. The two approaches appear to share humanistic assumptions and both claim intellectually rigorous and theoretically sound underpinnings.

It may be that Engle and Metcalf see in analysis, as compared to clarification, a more vociferous demand for good reasons, a more persistent effort to justify standards, a more direct appeal to rationality rather than personal experience as a means of validating values. Or it may be they saw the usefulness of maintaining a consistent logic in social studies. The logical mainstay of both reflective thinking and value analysis is the deductive argument. Minding your p's and q's became an important logical task in revolutionary classrooms.

Problem Solving

Engle's examples in "Decision Making" of what ought to go on in social studies classrooms take the form of problems to be solved by students. These ran "from very simple situations," as Engle expressed it, "...to very complex social problems...." Engle's contribution here was one of emphasis rather than invention. Problem solving had long been in the social studies vernacular.

As a formalized approach to learning and teaching, problem solving is usually attributed to Dewey. The CAT is illustrated by Dewey in the form of solving a problem. We may, with no great strain, conceptualize "problem" in such a way that

almost anything we do in classrooms can be thought of as problems. Engle comes close to that in "Decision Making." Thus, there are descriptive problems ("Which facts?" "What are the facts?"), conceptual problems ("What concept is most useful?"), problems of explanation ("How do you account for x?" "What type of explanation is most appropriate?"), problems of prediction ("What are the likely consequences?" "What would happen if x?"), and value problems ("Is that a good thing?" "Was that a right act?" "What should we do?").

Whether one thinks of these problems as different in kind, difficulty, or complexity may not be important. Engle used all three rubrics in 1960. What is important, however, is the recognition of the relationship among these problems. One possibility is that the relationship is additive, with conceptualization on the base line and description, explanation, prediction, and valuation following in order. Decisions at one level are logically dependent on decisions at prior levels.

This position suggests that in the absence of some kind of conceptualization, you can't do anything with a problem except feel it. You obviously can't say anything about the phenomenon except that something out there is causing you pain or frustration.

Another important point with respect to the use of problems in social studies instruction is that only by maintaining a narrow and contrived limitation can the treatment of problems be kept within the bounds of a single discipline. When problems are treated more naturally, discipline boundaries fade.

Obviously, the social sciences have their discipline-bound problems. A social scientist might spend his life on one such problem. "What follows Keynes now that it has stopped working?" might be one of these; but ramifications spill out all over the place on that one. "Should sociology go all-out statistical?" might be a better example. "Does symbolic interaction generate better explanations than role theory?" is still a better one. But students in junior and senior high schools would not find such questions zeroing in on *their* problems, though they might consider them with incidental interest.

One might expect more than incidental interest among adolescents and pre adolescents with problems generated by such questions as these:

Why can't we get jobs?

What's all the fuss about pornos and massages? They don't hurt anybody.

Why must we break the law to get grass?

Who blew it in the Quinlan case? I thought she was supposed to die.

These are not offered as a hit parade of problem generating questions. Rather, I ask them to illustrate the point. To what discipline does each belong? That is, if we begin discussing one of these questions, say, the Quinlan affair, in which one of the disciplines would our language be relevant? "Oh not just one," you would answer correctly. "More like several. There are moral, economic, medical, political, legal, social, psychological, and other issues involved." A social studies teacher could not

treat such a problem satisfactorily without touching most of those bases. Even if a teacher *determined* to contain the discussion of a class to the economics of euthanasia, the students probably would not allow it.

Thus, the two big problems with problems. First, along, say, the vertical axis of a problem are the conceptual, descriptive, explanatory, predictive, and judgmental questions that beg to be raised and answered. Once a problem orientation is assumed in a classroom, it is difficult, if not unnatural, not to go all the way. Earlier, I suggested these logical operations are additive in the sense that one cannot describe without some kind of prior conceptualization, cannot explain without both conceptualizing and describing, and on up the line. Making the prior decisions is the logical condition that must be met before the next highest type of problem can be dealt with. Now I am suggesting that there is also in problem oriented classrooms a psychological pressure to move to the top of the line and engage the normative questions.

Second, across the horizontal axis of a problem are the disciplines, realms, or points of view to which the concepts, facts, explanations, and criteria that can be applied to the problem belong. When teachers commit themselves and their classrooms to problem solving, they do so with the intellectual obligation to explore the contents of the horizontal realms. We are familiar with some of these realms as the social science disciplines. When the problems are conceptual, descriptive, explanatory, and predictive, the social sciences would appear to be necessary realms to explore, though probably not sufficient. While the most useful social concepts and the most powerful social explanations are presumed to belong to the various social sciences, by no means are all social concepts and explanations locked in those sacred temples. The rational problem solver works in a world of competition where the academic disciplines vie with all the culture's efforts to make sense of human experience. The commitment to be rational only limits the would-be solution finder/decision maker to the *scientific point of view* in the empirical aspect of this pursuit. That may not exclude all else but the social disciplines.

When the problem shifts upward to normative questions, when the judgments of good things, right acts, and what one ought to do are to be made, the horizontal axis is no less bewildering. At that level it is the *normative point of view* that the rational decision maker takes as he sorts out the standards to apply in the case. The several points of view, e.g., the moral, economic, political, prudential, and aesthetic points of view, that make up the normative point of view define the realms in which the valuing decision maker operates.¹⁹

The point to be made by this brief exploration into problems is summarized in a line of argument that runs something like this. If teachers opt for decision making as the heart of their instruction, and if the decision to be rational is among the early decisions they make, and if the problems approach is taken to be an appropriate methodology, then teachers must commit themselves and their classes to the scientific point of view in the empirical aspects of problems and to the normative point of view in the valiative aspects of problems. In so doing they set themselves

the tasks of treating the conceptual, descriptive, explanatory, and predictive operations with reference to the available range of social scientific knowledge. Moreover, they do this in preparation for treating the evaluative operation with reference to the full range of points of view in normative discourse.

"Shirley's simple theme" turns out to be not so simple, after all.

FAULTS AND FLAWS

Earlier I laid out a plan for analyzing the social studies revolution in which Engle played so important a part. My analysis, thus far, has referred to some personalities, goals, and structural parts. I promised a note on faults and flaws.

The major flaw of the revolution is that it didn't happen. Despite the logic, the rhetoric, the structure, the leadership, social studies instruction was not set on its ear in the 1960s nor in the 1970s. Social studies looks not significantly different today than it did 20 years ago or even 50 years ago. Engle's "Decision Making" is as relevant today as it was 17 years ago, not as a commemorative milestone of a journey taken but as a marker of a path yet to try.

Why didn't the revolution happen? I think there are only a few main reasons. It was too complex; it was too drastic; it was too threatening; and it was broached at a time when refurbishment, not revolution, was on the upswing. I will fill these reasons out with a few brief paragraphs.

We were terribly naive in the sixties. The statements about decision making, reflection, and inquiry, while difficult and sometimes complicated, were extraordinarily simplified. They read like a layman's introduction to brain surgery. The nitty-gritty details of logic were avoided either for fear of frightening teachers or because of a lack of training on the part of authors. The detailed analysis of classroom dialogues was omitted either out of fear of boring teachers or because we hadn't set our heads to such work. The manner in which knowledge from many fields could be utilized in a classroom was glossed over probably because we weren't sure how that could be done. Detailed instruction in how to teach the several phases of decision making was overlooked supposing either it would all come naturally or that piecemeal training is anathema to professional teachers.

It was a dual flaw, obviously. The complexity was a built-in characteristic and most of the oversimplification could not be helped at the time. We are more respectful of the complexity of "Shirley's simple theme" today; but for various reasons, many of them the same as before, we are still oversimplifying.

In Engle's 1960 summary of the revolutionary doctrines, the proposed changes were drastic. The mainstays of the field, history and the social sciences, were to be cut loose from their moorings. Their survival as discrete offerings in public schools appeared not to be crucial to a social studies program featuring decision making for citizenship. Courses would be different; activities, readings, teaching, and studying would be changed. Apparently students would learn an unfamiliar content. Textbooks could be abandoned; a variety of materials and resources would be needed. Lesson and class discussions would take on new patterns.

The changes appeared to be too many and too traumatic. Stability would be lost. Students would be confused, parents wouldn't understand it, and teachers would be uncomfortable. Too many persons, too many roles, and too many institutions were unthreatened. The bureaucracy shuddered. If history were removed, where would students gain their perspective, their linkages to the past? What security blanket would replace the textbook? How could we ever make sure that the material got covered? Would not teachers need to be retrained? What would college programs have to be like to prepare teachers to function as instructors and managers of decision making? The tradition cried out as if it were in grave danger.

But it need not have cried so loudly, for by the early sixties, Federal money, and lots of it, was on the way to give the tradition one more hurrah. It was a clever scheme; the revolutionaries were out-manuevered. By the end of the decade, the revolution was aborted. Only its rhetoric lived on in an outpouring of methods books, monographs, and journal articles that touted the glories of "Shirley's simple theme," while in the classroom, the old bones, painted and polished to look like new, rattled triumphantly.

FOOTNOTES

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¹¹Shirley H. Engle, "Exploring the Meaning of the Social Studies," *Social Education*, March, 1971, 280-288, 344.

¹²Charles Keller was writing within a year of Shirley's "Decision Making" that the term "socials tudies" should be abandoned altogether and replaced by "history and social sciences." Charles Keller, "Needed: Revolution in the Social Studies," *Saturday Review*, September 16, 1961, 60-62.

¹³Dewey, *op. cit.*

¹⁴Ernest E. Bayles, *Experiments with Reflective Teaching*, *Kansas Studies in Education*, Vol. No. 3, Lawrence, Kansas: School of Education, University of Kansas Publications, April 1965.

¹⁵H. Gordon Hullfish and Philip Smith, *Reflective Thinking: The Method of Education*, New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, Inc., 1961.

¹⁶Jack E. Cousins, "The Development of Reflective Thinking in an Eighth Grade Social Studies Class," in Massialas (ed.), *op. cit.*

¹⁷See Byron G. Massialas and Nancy F. Sprague, "Teaching Social Issues as Inquiry," *Social Education*, January, 1974, 10-19, 34-35.

¹⁸See Paul W. Taylor, *Normative Discourse*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961.

¹⁹Louis E. Rath, Merrill Harmin, and Sidney B. Simor, *Values and Teaching*, Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1966.

²⁰See Taylor, *op. cit.*, 107-124.

DECISION-MAKING: THE NEW SOCIAL STUDIES

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In November 1960, "Decision Making: The Heart of Social Studies Instruction" was published. I suspect that it is to this day one of the best known articles of its kind. And yet, as I have reviewed for the occasion of this symposium the nearly two decades that have passed since the publication of Shirley Engle's article, I have become increasingly aware that the field of social studies education has continued to overlook "decision making," neither exploring the conceptual dimensions of the term nor confronting its import for instructional and curricular development.

DECISION MAKING OVERLOOKED

From an historical perspective, this oversight coincides with the period when Jerome S. Bruner's summary of the Woods Hole Conference, *The Process of Education*,¹ had transformed "discovery" into a significant pedagogical factor, which was to have widespread influence first over the reform of science teaching and then over the teaching of all school subjects including, sadly enough, the social studies. I say "sadly" because I believe the processes of discovery are only peripherally related to "the development of desirable socio-civic and personal behavior,"² recognized as the ultimate goal of social studies education in an NCSS statement of October 1962. I further believe that the contributions of the processes of discovery to the support of a democratically-oriented society are, at best, indirect and quite limited.

I do not mean to underestimate the importance of discovery for the teaching of the sciences; it sums up in one powerful concept the variety of processes—some well understood, some only poorly intuited—used to achieve new empirical knowledge, which is the ultimate goal of all the sciences. Although being able to deal with new knowledge is part of democratically-oriented citizenship, it is not necessary to democracy that the citizen discover this knowledge but rather that he or she be capable of evaluating and using it while participating cogently in the decisions of their society. Decision making sums up in one powerful concept the variety of processes which are of crucial importance to democratic citizenship, and is, in this sense, to the social studies what discovery has been to the sciences.

My claim is a simple one: we in the social studies never gave decision-making a chance. In part, this may have been due to the excessive popularity and over-extension of discovery as a pedagogical instrument. And in part, the relevance and power of decision-making as a concept may not have been fully recognized by social studies educators—not even by its major proponent, Shirley Engle. Indeed, in a symposium of articles dealing with the revision of the social studies, which

appeared in April 1963, Engle does not deal with decision making as an organizing factor of the social studies, but rather explores for curriculum development those ideas and problems of persistent importance to human experience. This was by no means an inconsequential effort in a period when memorizing and ground covering still dominated the social studies. Nonetheless, the scant attention given then to decision making by Engle probably contributed significantly to the subsequent "overlooking" of decision making as a major factor in the restructuring of social education and made more likely the somewhat misguided acceptance of discovery as representative of those inquiry processes central to social studies education.

The Inquiry Approach And Decision Making

In that same set of 1963 articles, Byron Massialas, referring to Engle's proposed curriculum, pointed out the mandatory need to deal with ethical problems in social studies.⁷ He also emphasized that to deal with fundamental ideas and persistent problems of mankind was only one aspect of the social studies enterprise, and that an "equally important aspect of cognitive learning is the process by which ideas are developed, verified and reconstructed."⁸ Massialas proposed an inquiry-centered approach that would include such intellectual tasks as stipulating the definition of key terms, constructing a model of search, and collecting relevant authoritative data; and such intuitive thinking as might occur in "making a leap into the world of the unknown," conjecturing about "generalizable patterns of human conduct," and exhibiting an "imaginative understanding of the various degrees and levels of probability and predictability."⁹

So long as the ultimate goal of social studies education is perceived to be increasing the student's understanding of and skills in the social sciences, there is little to quarrel with in an inquiry-oriented approach. However, if the development of desirable socio-civil and personal behavior within the context of a democratically-oriented society remains uppermost, then we must deal with the fact that well-prepared, even brilliant scientists who, in full command of the various inquiry capabilities, have helped develop such potentially inhumane techniques as brainwashing and defoliation without any conviction on their part, rational or otherwise, about what they were doing except that it was their job. Our history is also replete with good scientists who have barely participated in the decision-making processes of their society. Having control of the processes involved in scientific inquiry and discovery does not mean that these will or can be used by citizens in their everyday, socio-civil circumstances. Massialas recognizes this problem to some degree when he notes: "The student might have been given the opportunity to examine all the evidence bearing on his beliefs and the proposed courses of action but still might accept a value position on faith alone."¹⁰ He goes on to give an example of the cigarette smoker who knows all the facts about the hazards of smoking but refuses to stop anyway.

Stipulation And Decision Making

The processes of inquiry present in scientific discovery are essentially different from those utilized by citizens in decision making. It is possible to stipulate and restipulate definitions of our socio-civic world in a myriad of defensible ways until the stipulations themselves become roadblocks to action. What is more, while the stipulation of key terms is of some real use to the successful carrying out of policy, far more central to the decision-making processes involved in determining policy is clarifying the range of ways that a key term may actually be used in the helter skelter of everyday talk. The systematic exploration of the range of meanings covered by a key term, regardless of the logical consistency of such meanings, can yield a fuller understanding of the complexities involved in a problem about which socio-civil or personal decisions must be made.

For instance, when it is said that we must protect our free enterprise system, it is of central importance to understand the vastly different interpretations of the term, "free enterprise," frequently used by the same speaker in the same conversation. This inconsistent shifting of meaning could be dismissed as unacceptable weakness in human logic. To do so, however, would mean to lose the real scope of the question at hand. If there are multifarious uses of a term, it is because these uses correspond to the needs and concerns of the society at large. Such needs and concerns rarely fit a logically acceptable pattern. This does not diminish the citizen's need to understand them in their full, however illogical, scope. To stipulate away illogical usages is a means of simplifying the complexities of real life, but it also contributes to socio-civic decision-making that somehow misses the problem altogether, as we have all witnessed with the plethora of affirmative action and equal opportunity rulings that have accomplished very little.

This discussion of stipulation goes to the core of the differences between the decision making of citizens and the discovery of scientists. The scientist may stipulate not only what his terms will mean but the confines of the problem with which he will deal. This allows the scientist to restrict his investigation so that he can ignore some aspects of whatever he is studying while dealing minutely with others. This possibility of limiting and thus simplifying the problems of science allows a degree of specialization neither possible nor desirable for the ordinary citizen involved in decision-making. The citizens' problems come full blown and usually with little clarity. The citizen cannot stipulate nor otherwise limit what needs to be studied but rather must try to comprehend the extent and nature of the questions before him or her. The vast number of considerations which must comprise any citizen's inquiry into, say, the energy crisis is mind boggling. Sometimes, it must appear to the citizen that no matter what decisions are taken, they will be wrong. What is worse, as the energy crisis has shown us all, even no decision is a decision.

The Necessity for Action

Another fundamental difference between the inquiry of scientists and that of citizens lies in the latter's need to act. Long before there is knowledge and even while existing knowledge is in a state of revision, the citizen must make decisions about what needs to be done, and he must be prepared to implement the decisions even if he has grave doubts about their wisdom. He must suspend judgments about an immensely complex set of possible events even while acting upon his judgment. This necessarily involves a different approach to inquiry from that employed by the scientist. While the scientist needs to suspend his judgment in the sense that he must refrain from reaching conclusions for which the evidence is insufficient, he can avoid taking action at least until he has reached a certain state of assuredness about his conclusions. Indeed, whatever knowledge he may discover may not lead to any action at all. This is a far cry from the pressures that beset the decision-making process of democratic citizenship. The confidence of benignly-held objectivity that a scientist may have while involved in gathering relevant data or in structuring and restructuring his models of search is a far cry from the doubts, conflicts and emotional involvement that accompany a citizen's inquiry into the significant socio-civic problems of his times. Comfortable wanderings of the intellect for the scientist may turn into disastrous applications of inadequate information for which the price may be very high, as our involvement in the Vietnam War has so painfully taught us. Even the most brilliant plan may carry flaws that in science would be of small cost and easily repaired, but in our civic lives may mean a human tragedy.

Ongoing Tentativeness

The models of search employed by citizens are in a constant siege of doubts. How relevant is human emotional reaction to a civic question, and if it is relevant, how can it be translated into authoritatively gathered data? How can the continuous, still unpredictable flux of conditions arising from our humanness be validly presented by any one model of search, which, no matter how often it is restructured, belies in its very nature the flux of our humanness? The citizen's approach to inquiry must incorporate *ongoing tentativeness* as basic to the validity of its models of search. Evidentially-supported generalizations, usually called "conclusions" in scientific inquiry, must remain in question perpetually.

Ongoing tentativeness and the continuous revision of generalizations are central to the processes of democratic decision-making and they are essentially different from, though related to, the process for scientific discovery. Science identified its hypotheses for investigation and then, as Massialas indicates, considers explicit statistical, logical or existential criteria for accepting or rejecting the hypotheses.⁷ An accepted hypothesis becomes a conclusion. The scientist assumes his conclusions are true until evidence forces him to restructure his truth. The citizen must cope not only with explicit, clearly definable criteria, but with his or her own implicit criteria,

the workings of which are often not understood. By every criterion that I can express, school grades are no longer important to me and yet I would be upset beyond words if I were to receive a "C" or "D" in a graduate course. The citizen must contend with internal forces, both cultural and personal, that the scientist largely ignores. Furthermore, even while believing that his or her decisions are right in light of what is held to be true, the citizen needs to keep in mind that there probably are numerous other "right" decisions and that the citizen may come to support some other "right" decision even if there is little change in the perceptions of what is true. In sum, the citizen must be prepared to deal with internal and external flux that is largely subjective in nature and, as of now, escapes the laws of probability as these operate in a free society.

This continuously hypothetical mode of inquiry, which never achieves more than tentativeness, and from which decisions must come that will, themselves, be subject to continuous modification, cannot but be a discouraging factor to the active participation of citizens in the decisions of their society. The "it-doesn't-matter-how-I-vote" syndrome that has afflicted most local and national elections in recent times may well be a reflection of the profound discomfort that people feel because they are being asked to operate in a state of continuous uncertainty. Citizen apathy may be no more than a seeking of psychological relief from a state of increasing doubt. In scientific inquiry, this same reticence to act could be viewed as scholarly reserve and reasonable protection from reaching rash conclusions. From the perspective of citizenship, it is a retreat from the decision-making processes necessary to the survival of any form of democracy. Furthermore, in the secondary schools, the tendency has been to foster this stance of *non* involvement via the model of the teacher as objective presenter of the facts free from personal bias. It is a model of teacher based on the ideals of science rather than on the traits of decision making. Social studies educators have not dealt very extensively with the conflicts inherent in democratic citizenship between the need to act and the state of ongoing tentativeness within which decisions must be made. Central to social education is not how to teach the attitudes and skills of scientists to citizens but how to teach citizens to continue to act with rational awareness in the midst of complexity, flux and tentativeness, that is, how to engage in decision-making within the milieu of a democratically-oriented society of the post-industrial age.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND THE NCSS GUIDELINES

By 1967, a number of significant questions about the relationship of social science inquiry to the social studies did begin to receive some limited attention from educators. In particular, James Shaver took the position that, "there is nothing in social science methodology that will help the citizen come to a defensible position,"⁴ and Fred Newmann emphatically pointed to the restrictive nature of social science inquiry which, "represents a relatively limited slice of human experience."⁵ However, the government-funded social studies curriculum projects were in full gear

by then, and, for the most part, these had embraced scientific inquiry. Even the exceptions, such as the project headed by Oliver at Harvard, with which both Shaver and Newmann were associated, really did not come to grips with the process of decision-making. Curriculum development revolved around the persistent issues of history and the development of discussion skills intended to increase students' understanding of the complexities involved in such issues. The question of helping students to become competent in the decision-making activities of citizenship was really not confronted.

In the *Social Studies Curriculum Guidelines*¹⁰ issued by NCSS in December, 1971, the need for citizen action was recognized as crucial. To quote, "...without action, neither knowledge nor rational processes are of much consequence."¹¹ The *Guidelines* go on to include social participation as a major function of the social studies along with the development of intellectual abilities,¹² the exploration of valuing¹³ and the acquisition of knowledge about the real world.¹⁴ Although the *Guidelines* take the position that, "there could be no social studies without the social sciences," they also contend that the, "social studies is something more than the sum of the social sciences," and proceed to include other sources of knowledge such as the humanities and the perceptions of students.¹⁵ By so doing, social participation, intellectual skills and knowledge are freed from the sometimes inadequate, sometimes peripheral directions of the social sciences.

However, though action and social participation are emphasized and vaguely conjoined with knowledge, valuing, and intellectual skills, the processes of decision-making and the skills necessary to engage effectively in decision-making are largely ignored. We seem to be quite conversant about the skills involved in scientific discovery but what skills are involved in the decision-making processes of citizenship? How is the decision-making capacity achieved? How does the citizen appraise himself rationally of the social and personal aspects of a civic question, including in his considerations both subjective and objective data? How, indeed, does the citizen overcome his own subjectivity even while needing to support and develop his personal interests? How does the citizen achieve defensible judgments about what is to be done while continuing to explore not only the data but possible alternatives to his own decisions? How can the citizen acquire a sense of achievement, of feeling good about his decision-making even while immersed in tentativeness and doubt? These are questions that have not yet been seriously addressed by social studies educators and they were not addressed in the 1971 NCSS *Guidelines*.

Social Participation And Decision Making

Clearly, both social participation and action are necessary conditions for decision-making in a democratic society but neither are sufficient for they can both be undertaken mindlessly. As far as action is concerned this must surely be obvious for even an imbecile is able to act. Social participation, on the other hand, does

imply the exercise of certain values and intellectual skills towards social ends of some kind. What must be remembered is that we are born into social participation and our ways of participating become so much a part of us so early that what may seem to be decision-making may be no more than a reflection of this early, pre-abstract stage of development. For instance, we usually think of ourselves as freely deciding upon the kind of employment we will take—yet even now, after all the publicity about liberation, how many men are kindergarten teachers and how many women are engineers? How much of real decision-making has gone into this male-female distribution? I suggest that this is one of many instances of mindless social participation in which we do what we do not because we are exercising our decision-making capacities but simply because it is the kind of social participation we came to know as youngsters. It is not just that we are Republicans because our parents were Republicans, but that we tend to hold on to the mind sets of our youth which often incorporate pre-determined kinds of social participation. Little real decision-making goes on.

This discussion regarding the distinction between social participation and decision-making might be no more than an intellectual exercise were it not for the widely held view that schools in general and social studies in particular ought to inculcate the values, norms and basic ideologies of society. On a first reading, it might even appear that this paper were implicitly supporting the inculcation of democracy. That is really not the case. Decision-making cannot be inculcated for the very act of inculcation would undermine those qualities of mindfulness essential to real decision-making. Democratic forms of governance cannot survive unless an informed citizenry does engage in unhampered decision-making activities. To the extent that the decision-making processes of citizens are hampered, the functioning of democratic governance is hampered. Social studies education dedicated to democratically-oriented citizenship and planned around decision-making processes can neither indoctrinate nor inculcate. Taken to the logical conclusion, democratic decision-making must be capable of deciding against democratic governance. The assumption, of course, of this author, is that the enlightened and truly free decision-making citizen will opt for democracy; that he will not opt to give up his powers of decision-making.

The Power of Enculturation

Let me take the consideration of inculcating norms and ideologies one step further to the very initial stages of our becoming members of our group—that is to the period of enculturation. While it is highly unlikely that any school program would or could undo these early years of enculturation, the acceptance of decision-making as central to social education would necessarily mean trying to counteract or slow down the phenomena of enculturation so that those kinds of social participation which the young absorb almost by osmosis can come under their scrutiny and thus become the object of decision-making activities. Certainly, trying to deal with

persistent problems of humankind is one way to undertake an effort to slow the phenomena of enculturation, and I suspect this was what underlay Engle's efforts in revising the social studies curriculum back in 1963. However, these problems must be brought into the pressing, often uncomfortable concerns about which people need to make decisions today. The taboos which often prevent social educators from dealing with disturbing questions must be set aside as was recommended long ago by both Massialas and Metcalf.¹⁶ The structure of family life that we mindlessly grow into ought to be challenged and explored. Is traditional family life really worthwhile for us today? Our views of a productive life need to be challenged: Is "getting a good job" really a desirable undertaking? The keynote of such explorations would be to create uncertainty even about the basic structures of the social order into which one is born, slowing enculturation and helping the young to confront uncertainties of the most important kinds both socially and personally, and would hopefully lead to an increased capacity to deal with basic questions of life as true decision-makers.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND DECISION MAKING

I began this paper by stating that the field of social studies had overlooked decision-making as a crucial element of curriculum development, and while the statement is still largely true, there have been several recent efforts indicative of a growing readiness to consider the processes of decision-making as central to citizenship education. The 1971 *Social Studies Curriculum Guidelines* were, in a sense, the turning point for social studies education away from strictly scientific inquiry. It was, however, an ambiguous turning away for the social sciences were still held to be central to the very existence of social studies. In the early seventies, the field entered a period of curricular uncertainty that is still with us. If not inquiry, then what? Oliver's *Public Issues Series*, based on the discussion of persistent questions in human history, seemed to result in no greater success for active citizenship than had any of the scientific inquiry materials.

In this stasis, the growth of the values clarification movement was the first significant step back to a serious consideration of the processes of decision-making in the social studies curriculum. Values clarification, however, stops at the point where youngsters can clarify their own values and understand more fully the difficulties involved in relating their sometimes conflicting values with those of the society at large.

The Engle and Longstreet Design

In 1972, I joined Dr. Engle in developing a curricular design for social education,¹⁷ which did treat decision-making more fully and directly than had been done in the past. But I do not believe either of us fully recognized the curricular power inherent in an extended conceptualization of the term. Although we dealt with the citizen's need to, "seek new knowledge and new models," and recognized

that, "while he is deciding, he must also be speculating,"¹⁸ we thought of the capacity to engage in decision-making as an outcome of using our curricular design rather than as the structural underpinning of the design itself. Had we conceived of decision-making as a fundamental component of the curriculum, we might have engaged in a more indepth analysis of the nature of the processes involved in decision-making, and, I believe, we would have brought these right into the structure of the curriculum.

Although convinced of the importance of decision-making, Engle and I were just coming out of a period of social education steeped in the social sciences. We were taken by a desire to develop a curricular design for the study of citizenship that would hold for citizenship the logical power contained in the structure of the social science disciplines. We came up with a set of six action-concepts, the analysis of which could serve as the basis for a series of persistent questions about any situation that might confront the citizen. If the student could raise insightful questions about personally and socially relevant concerns, and if he or she were sufficiently flexible and open minded so as to revise the models continually, we assumed the student would engage in decision-making. We did not really confront the question, which I now believe central to social education, of how to help citizens to continue to act intelligently while in a persistent state of uncertainty.

The Banks and Clegg Model

The year following the publication of the Engle-Longstreet effort, James Banks with Ambrose Clegg, Jr., issued a textbook for the preparation of teachers which brought the analysis of the processes of decision-making to the center stage of social studies teaching, and thereby took an important step toward the serious incorporation of decision-making into the core of the curriculum.¹⁹ Banks and Clegg point to the method of science as the best way of achieving the knowledge necessary to decision-making because, "it is systematic, self-correcting, open-ended, and public."²⁰ Values inquiry is also considered a crucial component of the decision-making process. While social inquiry based on the scientific method and on the social science disciplines, taken singly or in interdisciplinary fashion, is expected to lead to social knowledge, value inquiry is to lead to value clarification and, presumably, to knowledge about values.

The model proposed as representative of decision-making offers an excellent beginning upon which to build a theory of decision-making for social studies curriculum development. It is, however, only a beginning still caught in the aura of the sciences and still ignoring fundamental differences between what scientists do and what citizens do. Theoretically, these differences are ignored by separating the scientific processes of the social sciences, summed up in interdisciplinary fashion as "social inquiry" from the processes of "value inquiry" which take their cue from logical analysis. It is assumed that the understandings derived from these two types of inquiry can and will be synthesized so that a rational decision may be made. That

it is practicable on an everyday basis for the average citizen to stipulate this kind of separation of inquiries is certainly open to doubt. That decision-making could even await the outcomes of these different inquiries, almost as if it were to be an end-result of a series of rational enterprises, is equally doubtful. The Banks-Clegg model of decision-making does not reckon with the phenomena of enculturation which imbue the values and knowledge of the young long before they are capable of abstract analysis. Nor does it deal with the deep emotional involvement in problems which citizens have in vastly different and unpredictable ways and which would normally disqualify the scientific inquirer as an objective investigator. The frequently unreasonable conflicts among personal values held by the same individual, among social values held by the same society, and between social and personal values must be brought into the model of decision-making and their unyielding complexity at least recognized. The need to act usually does not allow decision-making to be an end result, and the objectivity of scientists and logicians is often an unreasonable expectation for citizens. A model of decision-making needs to be developed which recognizes the circumstances and complexities of citizenship rather than of science.

The Gillespie and Patrick Program

In 1974, Gillespie and Patrick issued a monograph describing their development of a two semester program entitled, *Comparing Political Experiences*,²¹ which proposed the participation of students in the actual politics of the schools as part of a high school government course intended to teach the application of political science principles. The incorporation of active, group-oriented participation as an essential element of the curriculum was a giant step toward bringing decision-making processes directly into the scope of school study.

However, the program remained, like the 1971 guidelines and the Banks-Clegg effort, ambiguously suspended between the social sciences and those activities related to governance and social self-fulfillment. Gillespie and Patrick posited that the successful use of political competencies, which must include active involvement, would yield self-fulfillment.²² Although aware that social self-fulfillment refers to a psychological state of mind, they treated it as a pattern of behavior.²³ In this way, the innumerable complexities and uncertainties that would be present in any conception combining the self and the social were limited to the observable. It was their opinion that such participation skills as "making effective decisions" could be "translated into specified sets of measurable lesson objectives."²⁴ Toward this end, they concluded that a very careful match must be made, via the curricular design, between the political principles to be studied and the participation experiences planned for students.²⁵ They finally zeroed in on the schools because these, "provide an opportunity for controlled integration of political knowledge and experience."²⁶

It may well be that Gillespie and Patrick were involved in an effort to gain for social participation the logical power that had also been part of the quest of Engle and Longstreet. Admittedly, participation experiences brought into the school's

curriculum might become a helter skelter of activities, and some way of dealing with them that would lead to more powerful uses of human rationality is important. Gillespie and Patrick, however, undertook this task by contriving to exclude from participation experiences the uncertainties and complexities usually accompanying the citizen's need to decide and act. By limiting their curriculum plan to observable objectives and environments such as schools, they managed to remain within the realm of political science studies rather than with studies of decision-making and citizenship. They could thus avoid the more uncomfortable "taboo" topics of our times and engage youngsters in investigations that could exist within present institutional structures rather than in explorations of alternative, perhaps radical institutional structures.

In fairness to Gillespie and Patrick, that they intended to teach competencies derived from political science and the development of limited, laboratory-like situations is reasonable from that perspective. It becomes peripheral and less reasonable if the competencies of democratically-oriented decision-making are central objectives of curriculum. It is really a question of perspective and though they chose a perspective still imbued with the curricular premises of scientific inquiry, I believe their efforts to bring real participation activities into the study of governance and to relate these to social self-fulfillment has contributed powerfully to the future incorporation of decision-making activities into the school's curriculum.

THE FUTURE OF DECISION MAKING

As we near the 1980's, social studies education seems ready to undertake an indepth exploration of the curricular potentials of decision-making. We have already taken some significant preparatory steps: The Banks-Clegg instructional model of decision-making and the Gillespie-Patrick incorporation of active, participatory experiences into the curriculum. Now a high school government textbook written by Fraenkel, *et al* has been issued which places decision-making squarely in the center of the study of American government while avoiding the yoke of the social science disciplines.²⁷ Decision-making, however, is conceived as primarily those processes engaged in by the leadership while the constant involvement of average citizens in decision-making is dealt with only indirectly. Questions are asked such as, "How much influence do interest groups have on decision makers?"²⁸ and "How influential is the press?"²⁹ as though the press and interest groups were somehow removed from the basic processes of decision-making.

In the minds of many social studies educators, the concept of decision-making has been subordinated to that of social participation with a distinction being made between the decision-making of leadership and the activities of followership. Such distinctions may be useful in the development of political scientific principles but it adds little to the study of how to be an effective involved citizen. Ongoing tentativeness, complexity, flux, the continuous revision of knowledge as well as of decisions already taken are traits that characterize a citizen's decision-making in a

democratic society whether he is a leader or a follower. In a democracy, followership cannot be passive—it must involve active decision-making. The Fraenkel text looks upon participants as though they were *not* engaged in decision-making processes basically similar to those engaged in by avowed leaders. Indeed, voting itself is treated as a behavior of passive followership rather than as a significant policy determining activity.

Throughout the preceding discussion, I have alluded to what I conceive to be major attributes of decision-making in a democratic society. While I do not think they form a complete or sufficient schema for the study of decision-making, I believe they do offer a core of essential considerations for whatever curricular designs might be forthcoming.

Several significant processes of decision-making have been discussed and need to be structured into the curriculum. Among these are: (1) Maintaining an intellectual willingness and capacity for ongoing tentativeness, (2) Recognizing the need to act in the face of doubt and uncertainty, (3) Engaging in continuous revisions of decisions and models, both new and of long standing usefulness, (4) Achieving distance from and objectivity over socio-civic and personal activities learned via enculturation, (5) Confronting and dealing with the relationships of subjective and objective data to each other, and to the personal and social aspects of the problem at hand, (6) Being alert to unexpected, possibly significant changes, and (7) Continuing to apply rationality to complex problems even while taking into serious consideration nonrational forms of data.

These processes and others that I may have overlooked in no way exclude the need for improving such thinking skills as classifying, comparing and contrasting, extrapolating, generalizing, etc., or such scholastic competencies as reading, interpreting charts, graphing, etc. These skills are equally necessary to the processes of discovery and the processes of decision-making, and certainly must be developed within the study of citizenship if the power derived from the exercise of rational capacities is to be available to the citizen. It should be kept in mind, however, that the ways in which rational capacities come to be used is of major importance to the effectiveness of their use. A scientist developing these skills does so in ways and for processes which are different from those of citizenship and there is no assurance that transfer of skills will occur between basically different situations or that the differences in situations will be taken into account by the citizen. The processes involved in the decision-making of democratic citizenship significantly influence the form taken by intellectual skills and this needs to be acknowledged in the curriculum.

The incorporation of active, group oriented participation in "real world," socio-civic experiences is a necessary curricular move. This might mean that students would spend periods working with city institutions or charitable organizations; it might also mean working out a personal problem that could have civic importance such as whether to live out of wedlock. Such an experiential component would lessen the control that schools usually have over the outcomes of study, but unless schools are willing to work with "real world" participatory experiences, with all the

conflicts and lack of predictability that that implies, it is doubtful they can contribute significantly to the continued survival of a truly democratic society, which must have at its crux the valid, mindful decision-making of its average citizens.

The importance of the average citizen to democratic decision-making must be acknowledged. A social studies curriculum cannot successfully deal with democratic decision-making unless the deep involvement of all citizens in the processes of decision-making is fully recognized and brought into the essential design of the curriculum. The qualities of decision-making are equally present in leadership and followership, and always imply active engagement and mindful participation.

I have no doubt but that whatever programs might be designed with these considerations in mind flaws will be found. If flaws discouraged us, we social studies educators would have given up long ago. But we persist in taking our tentative decisions even while recognizing mind boggling complexity, uncertainty in what we propose to do and an awareness that we may be terribly wrong. All too frequently, we employ our rational capacities poorly and the outcomes reflect our failings; sometimes even our best efforts fail. But we persist, acknowledging our need to act. If only we could communicate to our students this persistence, we might lead them to become a community of decision-makers.

FOOTNOTES

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³Byron G. Massialas, "Revising the Social Studies; An Inquiry-Centered Approach," *Social Education*, April, 1963, 187.

⁴*Ibid.*, 185.

⁵*Ibid.*, 186.

⁶*Ibid.*, 189.

⁷*Ibid.*, 186.

⁸James P. Shaver, "Social Studies: The Need for Redefinition," *Social Education*, Vol. XXXI, No. 7, November, 1967, 590.

⁹Fred M. Newmann, "Questioning the Place of Social Science Disciplines in Education," *Social Education*, Vol. XXXI, No. 7, November, 1967, 595.

¹⁰NCSS Task Force on Curriculum Guidelines, "Social Studies Curriculum Guidelines," *Social Education*, December, 1971.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 856.

¹²*Ibid.*, 857.

¹³*Ibid.*, 858.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 856.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 857.

¹⁶Byron Massialas appealed for this, as did Lawrence Metcalf—back in the fifties and early sixties: *op.cit.*, Byron Massialas, 187; Lawrence E. Metcalf, "Some Guidelines for Changing Social Studies Education," *Social Education*, Vol. XXVII, No. 4, April, 1963, 197.

¹⁷Shirley H. Engle and Wilma S. Longstreet, *A Design for Social Education In the Open Curriculum*, New York: Harper and Row, 1972.

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¹⁹James A. Banks with Ambrose A. Clegg, Jr., *Teaching Strategies for the Social Studies: Inquiry, Valuing and Decision-Making*, Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1973.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 18.

²¹Judith A. Gillespie and John J. Patrick, *Comparing Political Experiences*, The American Political Science Association, 1974.

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²³*Ibid.*, 8.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 27.

²⁵*Ibid.*, 41.

²⁶*Ibid.*

²⁷Jack R. Fraenkel, Frank T. Kame, Jack W. Sutherland, and Rudie W. Tretten, *Decision-Making in American Government*, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1977.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 407.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 361.

BUILDING AN ATTENTIVE PUBLIC IN SOCIAL STUDIES

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INTRODUCTION

A transcending problem for social studies today is the absence of an attentive public. To put it bluntly—very few persons give a damn about the social studies. While it is probably true that social studies has a *less* attentive public today than a decade ago, such a claim is unnecessary. It is enough that attention to social studies is at a low ebb, and that corrective measures should be undertaken. What is to be done?

The cautious among us may argue that we should let well enough alone. "Don't," they suggest, "stir up anything—lest potential antagonists destroy the gains already made. Remember MACOS and Kanawha County!" Cynics, on the other hand, will argue that the solution is to deliberately push social studies to the verge of extinction. A public outcry will then arise throughout the land, and like the alligator and the American bald eagle, social studies can take a triumphant recovery. I submit that neither caution nor cynicism will increase attention to social studies. A more aggressive and honorable perspective is needed.

The brief comments to follow represent a beginning effort at three tasks: (1) to introduce the concept of attentive public and describe its place in social studies, (2) to analyze the possible causes and potential consequences of the continued absence of an attentive public in social studies, and (3) to suggest an agenda for increasing the quantity and the quality of the attentive public in social studies.

WHAT IS AN ATTENTIVE PUBLIC?

We shall stipulate a definition of attentive public as a group of persons who commit a significant portion of their time to understanding, articulating, critiquing and seeking action on a common issue or problem. Members of an attentive public do not necessarily share the same values and beliefs. Indeed, any given attentive public may be pluralistic and fractious. What its members *do* share is an active interest in the central issue or problem.

Attentive publics abound in our society; they are the life-blood of a democratic political system. For example, the League of Women Voters presently is spending a good share of its time studying and analyzing the United Nations. They are, in effect, acting as an increasingly important segment of the larger attentive public with a manifest interest in the United Nations. Another example is the attentive public that has arisen from the possibility that a worldwide communication network for American submarines will be constructed in Michigan's northern peninsula. That

this communication system could have adverse effects on the health of northern peninsula residents has created heightened awareness, vigorous debate and political action. A third example is the recent enlargement of the public that is attentive to American foreign policy. President Carter's promotion of human rights as a cornerstone of American foreign policy has apparently rekindled, at least temporarily, a flagging interest in international affairs. A final example, much smaller in scope but closer to home, is a recent combined effort of the American Council on Education and the National Council for the Social Studies to create an attentive public in regard to the significance of the citizen education portion of Title VI of the National Defense Education Act. This effort was unsuccessful for the 1977 and 1978 fiscal years. Nineteen seventy-nine, however, looks more hopeful.

The *existence* of an attentive public promotes intelligent, systematic change, provides a system of checks and balances, and protects against major errors or upheavals. The *absence* of an attentive public will place an issue beyond the public pale—to the secrecy of inner chambers or to oblivion. Social studies is teetering on the brink and its survival requires a much more vigorous public. Therein lies the concern of this paper. *What we seek are more persons who share an active interest in the social studies.*

THE ATTENTIVE PUBLIC IN THE SOCIAL STUDIES

The notion of attentive public as it relates to the social studies can be clarified by examining what lies behind this present occasion, the Engle Symposium. The man we honor has created and sustained an identifiable portion of the contemporary attentive public in the social studies. Those here today are members of this particular group because we have been stimulated by his seminal question: What is the heart of the social studies? This persistent quest of Shirley Engle for essence and excellence in social studies has touched lives and tempered institutions. Each of us is deeply honored to be a member of this special group which has been nourished by Shirley Engle. We study, we try to understand, we produce, we discuss, we contend, we act. Our attention to social studies is intrinsic and abiding. Indeed, we are so attentive that spouses, family and friends may sometimes rebel.

The very existence, however, of this group tends to heighten our awareness that today there are precious few such energy centers within the social studies. This is unfortunate for many reasons, but mainly because it is the *major* responsibility of existing energy centers to make social studies a more vigorous, honorable and useful enterprise. Shirley Engle's retirement is a time to take note of his vital contributions to this enterprise in a field that sorely needs to strengthen its attentive public and seems to be losing its will to ask the central question: What is the heart of the social studies?

IS THERE A NEED FOR A MORE ATTENTIVE PUBLIC?

Witness the following items drawn primarily from the recent regional literature of the social studies. This regional literature is important, I believe, because it tends to have somewhat different purposes, authors and conclusions from the national literature found in journals like *Social Education*. Closer to the trenches, the regional literature tends to be more pessimistic about social studies than does the national literature. Listen to these lonely, even desperate voices detailing conditions that literally beg for a more attentive public.

The editor of the New Hampshire social studies newsletter writes:

Recently one of New Hampshire's most humanistic, most innovative high school principals [said]...that social studies is now given lowest priority among academic high school departments. His comment rather accurately represents the low level of esteem to which social studies have fallen during the past decade. If his comment errs, it probably is in failing to include some non-academic departments among those which receive higher priority than do social studies.¹

The Wisconsin Council for the Social Studies announces:

The Executive Board of WCSS has voted not to continue the publication of this [state social studies] journal because of the mounting costs of publication.²

The president of the Dade County Council for the Social Studies warns:

Social Studies Education is in severe trouble. Not only has it lost ground in Florida, but increasingly [school] systems in many parts of the nation are reducing or doing away with social studies requirements in favor of courses perceived to be more important.

...a group of junior high principals [in Dade County] proposed that they be allowed to waive social studies requirements for their students. The social studies requirement for the G.E.D. [high school equivalency degree] has been dropped. And, perhaps most symptomatic, *The Miami Herald* has dropped social studies as one of the categories for its annual [school] awards.

Think about what is happening. With astounding rapidity, social studies education is being transformed into a dinosaur. Over developed in some cases, under developed in others. Surely doomed as the trend continued unless measures are taken.³

A team of West Coast researchers, after surveying high school students in San Francisco, concludes:

...social studies is regarded differently from the other academic subjects students are required to take in high schools. Students believe (and were

supported in their belief by the perceived attitudes of their parents, counselors, and friends) that social studies courses were less important than math and English for their occupational futures.'

A research study to determine the attitudes of K-5 teachers in one Florida school district toward social studies indicated that "most teachers, 69% in grades K-5, have some degree of aversion [sic] to teaching social studies...[these data seem] to support the conclusion that attitudes toward social studies have dropped in the last five years." The author concluded that "the returning emphasis upon the 'Basics' is probably not going to increase the incidence of social studies activities in the elementary grades...and there appears to be a great deal of work to be done in changing the attitudes of elementary teachers toward the subject."

A final indignity. As she sits in her classroom eating lunch, a high school social studies teacher is hit in the face with a whipped-cream pie thrown by a ski-masked intruder. Although the culprit is still unknown, he is alleged to be an honor student who was hired as a hit man to do the job for an estimated \$100. It is not clear why this particular teacher was the victim, but one student offered this explanation: "Most of the history and government teachers are unpopular because they have a dull subject to teach and they don't do anything to make it more interesting." Even if this act were done as a prank, the social and professional symbolism is cause for concern. If it were done with malice, the implications are chilling in this era of political terrorism.

Where is the attentive public who can deal with the derivation and consequences of the malaise in social studies as reflected in these separate occurrences? Is there a need for a more attentive public in the social studies? My answer is definitely yes.

WHAT EXPLAINS THE LACK OF AN ATTENTIVE PUBLIC?

Why do so few care about the fate of the social studies? The causes are complex and interwoven, extremely difficult to sort out and to grasp clearly. Any such effort to do so is risky business. Without a sense of the "why," however, the search for solutions can become a mindless tilting at windmills.

I shall attempt to isolate, identify and analyze two possible explanations which account for the lack of an attentive public in the social studies. They shall be called the definitional explanation and the cultural explanation.

The Definitional Explanation

In 1973, Shaver and Larkins wrote that "*Research on teaching social studies must be based on some definition of social studies...if there is to be a fruitful accumulation of knowledge.*" This problem of definition is pervasive and has plagued the field since its inception. The lack of a clear, agreed-upon definition is directly related to the difficulty of building an attentive public.

One harmful effect of a vague definition is an identity confusion among social studies practitioners. Only rarely, in my experience, do teachers refer to themselves as social studies teachers—they prefer to be known as history teachers, government teachers, or geography teachers. A recent example is that the 1977 National Teacher of the Year from La Mesa, California, prefers to be known as a history teacher, not as a social studies teacher.

A similar identity confusion exists among teacher educators as well. Teacher educators in universities and colleges are almost as likely to hold an appointment in an academic department as in education. This fact is important. Among teacher educators, beliefs about social studies tend to be related to the location of their university appointment. Those with appointments in academic departments tend toward a discipline orientation of the social studies; those with appointments in education prefer more of a social issues definition.¹

This professional schism, even schizophrenia, in the schools and universities tends to impede efforts to rally any significant number of supporters or any substantial resources around the flag of social studies. These identity problems among teachers and teacher educators may help to explain why the memberships in many social studies professional organizations have been in a steep decline during a period of increasing need.

The lack of a clear definition also tends to make the social studies vulnerable to the songs of various sirens who would use the profession for their own purposes. One well-known siren sings seductively of free enterprise education. This siren sings softly about the "money for curriculum materials and staff development workshops to be had from Consolidated Edison and Exxon." For some beleaguered social studies educators this can be an overpowering message, a kind of last resort to prevent social studies from total disintegration. Only too late do we find that the siren of free enterprise is not interested in open inquiry and objectivity. The real purpose, we discover, is to use social studies as the "last chance to save our way of life." We learn the hard way whose life is being saved and whose last chance it is. It is not social studies.

In summary, the problem of the definition of the social studies places us on the defensive, almost to the point of apologizing for our existence. We need to make a better and more aggressive case. This part of our future is mostly in our hands, and getting serious about the importance of the definition of social studies is one way to shape that future.

The Cultural Explanation

Many of the important reasons why social studies lacks an attentive public, however, are embedded in the culture itself and consequently are more difficult for social studies educators to control, or even to influence in any substantial way. It is important, however, to understand these forces.

A major cultural reason for the lack of an attentive public in the social studies is the decline of optimism about the usefulness of schooling in general.² A knockout

combination of previous excessive claims by educators and unfulfilled expectations of the population has created a ready climate for the reassessment of the place of formal schooling in our society. The public demand for a "basic" education is only one of the most visible manifestations of this reassessment. Basics, I fear, is just the tip of this iceberg. Of greater consequence, in the long run, is the declining enrollment in elementary and secondary schools. Where K-12 enrollment increased by 3% between 1965 and 1975, by 1985 this enrollment will decrease by 8%. The figures for secondary education are even more startling, dropping from a gain of 21% between 1965 and 1975 to a loss of 15% by 1985.¹⁰ Declining enrollments will almost certainly weaken the political and financial support of schools.

Looming on the immediate horizon is another set of cultural problems which stem from the attitudes of adolescents and pre-adults toward schooling. A recent study of a middle-class suburban high school on the East Coast reveals that students in the 1970s are faced with two relatively new problems (Larkin 1977). Both problems are quite severe; the decline of institutional legitimacy and a worsening job market. Combined, they are resulting in what Larkin calls "The Great Refusal."¹¹ Following the collapse of the youth protest of the 1960s and now faced with the lack of alternatives in the 1970s suburban youth have developed the characteristics of the disadvantaged: increased crime, venereal disease, despair and drug abuse. Suburban schools, and the urban schools before them, have declined as a moral force and their once-important community function has disappeared. Voluntary clubs have declined and, according to the study, many students view school attendance as unpaid labor. My own recent experience supports these conclusions about emerging youth attitudes. One must wonder what the impact of the "Great Refusal" will be on younger brothers and sisters now in elementary and junior high schools.

Social studies education was conceived early in this century on the assumption that formal schooling is a given in our society. For a variety of reasons, that assumption is now under heavy fire. If our society decides that formal schooling, especially secondary schooling, is not important for everyone, it is hard to imagine the continued existence of social studies as a strong professional force. One can hypothesize that "if the institutional importance of formal schooling declines, to that same or greater extent we can assume a decline of social studies."

The cultural explanation is not a pleasant topic for the existing attentive public in the social studies. Having cut our educational teeth during a period of growing optimism, many of us are neither trained nor temperamentally suited to deal with the consequences of a decline in formal schooling. I submit, however, that if we begin to think of social studies as an idea independent of (but not necessarily divorced from) formal school settings, the problem begins to take on a more manageable proportion.

It is an artifact of our short history that social studies instruction has been concentrated in elementary and secondary schools. If decision-making, however, is indeed the heart of social studies instruction, there is nothing in our future which says that decision-making must be tied only to formal schooling settings. To the

contrary, the concept of decision-making can be taught in almost any institutional or organizational setting—in service clubs, adult education and businesses.

Today, we know that cultural priorities regarding schooling are shifting; centers of influence are changing; the attentive public in the social studies is becoming more diffused. Any effort to enlarge the attentive public in social studies must be cognizant of and consistent with these changes, and must somehow proceed apace in the midst of severe institutional disruptions.

This portrait of confusion and change in the profession is based upon some data and more speculation. I believe, however, the basic projection is valid. One wishes for adequate time to discuss and to plan carefully. More likely, the leading edge of the storm will be quickly upon us. I am reminded of Tom James, then Dean of the School of Education at Stanford, warning in 1968 that school enrollment would soon be in a steep decline. This decline, he suggested, would have great implications for educators. In 1968 no one paid much attention. By 1972, in only four short years, his predictions were coming true and panic was emerging. Time, I submit, is not our ally.

TOWARD AN AGENDA FOR BUILDING AN ATTENTIVE PUBLIC IN THE SOCIAL STUDIES

Given the magnitude of the problem, my suggestions for building a more attentive public in social studies are conservative and represent mainly an acceleration of the pace of emerging trends. Others who share similar concerns about the fate of the social studies may wish to advocate stronger measures. Let them step forward and join the dialogue. We are ready and willing to listen. More than anything, we need to challenge mind-sets and to break the cake of custom.

First, I propose that we redouble our efforts in local setting by working with practitioners in school settings and interacting within the local community about social studies. This will provide a face-to-face relationship to test theories and abstractions and will stimulate more widespread thinking about social studies thereby enlarging eventually the attentive public. Second, I propose a dialogue about social studies as it occurs in international settings. Social studies can and should be an important part of the growing interdependence of the global society. Through the cross-cultural exchange of ideas about social studies we may find areas for new growth. Third, I propose that those who seek the heart of the social studies participate in both local and international endeavors. One without the other is inadequate. I'm growing increasingly weary of community-based civic education programs which ignore global relationships and of space-ship earth programs which never land in the reality of local communities. Any acceptable definition of the social studies in the future must be able to absorb and synthesize both local and international realities.

This suggested agenda proposes to bring local and international concerns into better balance with the national focus emphasized during the last decade or so.

Existing national curriculum projects, for example, need to be updated periodically; but the need for brand-new curriculum projects which reflect academic disciplines is a questionable expenditure of scarce resources. A better direction is to get social studies educators into the realities of local communities and into the cultural experiences of international arenas. From this experiential mold will hopefully emerge the definition of social studies we seek, and the human and material resources to realize that definition.

It is noteworthy and encouraging that the National Council for the Social Studies is moving rapidly toward both more local and international activities. Its sponsorship of regional meetings and significant international forums are among the most hopeful signs of vitality in the social studies today. Professional organizations like the NCSS should use an increasing amount of their resources and leverage to encourage more participation and activity at both the local and international levels.

SUMMARY

I have argued for the enlargement of the attentive public in the social studies. Two obstacles to this goal are the ill-defined nature of the social studies and an increasing pessimism about formal schooling. It was suggested that the attentive public in the social studies can be enlarged by providing a combination of experiences in both local and international settings. Greater attention to these neglected arenas, both given low priority during the period of the new social studies, may give us fresh insight into the definition of social studies and may provide us with renewed optimism about the future of social studies.

What is the heart of the social studies? We are still searching. But thanks to Shirley Engle, the man whom we honor, *we are searching*.

FOOTNOTES

¹David D. Draves, "Editor's Prerogative," *Horizons*, Newsletter of the New Hampshire Council for the Social Studies, Vol. 1, No. 2, January 1977, 1.

²*Social Studies Journal*, Wisconsin Council of the Social Studies, 1975-76, 3.

³Tom Coats, "Editorial," *Social Views*, Newsletter of the Dade County (Florida) Council for the Social Studies, Vol. 1, No. 2, January 1977, 1.

⁴Celestino Fernandez, Grace Carroll Massey and Sanford M. Dornbusch, "High School Students' Perceptions of Social Studies," *The Social Studies*, Vol. 67, No. 2, March/April 1976, 51-57.

⁵Fred L. Prince, "Social Studies in Comparison with Other Subjects in the Elementary School: A Survey of Teacher Attitudes," *Trends in Social Education*, Quarterly Journal of the Florida Council for the Social studies, Vol. 22, No. 2, Winter 1976, 26-30.

⁶Gary Gibbs, "Pie in Teacher's Face Has School in a Lather," *Miami News*, March 2, 1977, 6.

⁷James P. Shaver and A. Guy Larkins, "Research on Teaching Social Studies" in *AERA Second Handbook of Research on Teaching*, Robert M. W. Travers, ed., Chicago, Illinois: Rand McNally, 1973, 1243-1262.

⁸Jan L. Tucker, "Teacher Educators and the 'New' Social Studies," *Social Education*, Vol. 36, No. 5, May 1972, 547-554.

⁹David Tyack, "The Decline of Optimism About Schools and Schooling," Address to the International Reading Association Annual Meeting, Miami Beach, Florida, May 3, 1977.

¹⁰National Center for Educational Statistics. *Statistics of Trends in Education: 1965-66 to 1985-86*, United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, January 1977.

¹¹Ralph W. Larkin, "Nothing But the Dead and Dying in My Little Town: Suburban High School Youth and Cultural Crisis," Paper Presented to the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, April 6, 1977.